IN THE DRAWINGS

Submitted herewith are two (2) sheets of replacement drawings, in which "7" has been changed to --71-- in Figs. 3-5, as required in the Office Action.

## REMARKS

This application has been reviewed in light of the Office Action dated February 28, 2006. Claims 1, 3, 5 and 6 are presented for examination. Claims 2 and 4 been cancelled, without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter presented therein. Claims 1 and 3 have been amended to define more clearly what Applicants regard as their invention. New Claims 5 and 6 have been added to provide Applicants with a more complete scope of protection. Claims 1 and 3 are in independent form. Favorable reconsideration is requested.

The drawings were objected to for the reasons given in section 1 of the Office Action. Figs. 3-5 have been amended as requested in the Office Action, and thus the objection is deemed to be overcome.

Claims 1-4 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2001/0039161 (Sato).

Before addressing this rejection, an aspect of the present invention will first be described.

Conventionally, in case of energization processing within a vessel, heat barely will escape, if at all, from a substrate at an area thereof covered with the vessel, but can escape easily from another area thereof not covered with the vessel. Accordingly, if the area covered with the vessel and the other area not covered with the vessel are equally heated, the temperature distribution in the substrate would become non-uniform, and

thermal expansion also would be non-uniform, and thereby the substrate can become broken.

In order to solve the above problem, and according to an aspect of the present invention, a first temperature adjusting mechanism adjusts a temperature of an area of a substrate covered with a vessel, while a second temperature adjusting mechanism adjusts a temperature of another area of a substrate not covered with a vessel. That is, the area covered with the vessel and the other area not covered with vessel are respectively under independent temperature controls.

Claim 1 is directed to an energization processing apparatus for performing, in a reduced-pressure atmosphere, an energization process on electric conductors which are placed on a substrate. The apparatus comprises a vessel which has an exhaust hole and which covers the electric conductors and one region on a surface of the substrate where the electric conductors are placed, to create an airtight atmosphere between the substrate and the vessel. A first temperature adjusting mechanism adjusts a temperature of the one region on the surface of the substrate covered with the vessel, and a second temperature adjusting mechanism adjusts a temperature of another region on the surface of the substrate not covered with the vessel.

Sato discloses that a substrate is covered and hermetically sealed with a vessel, and a plurality of temperature adjusting mechanisms are disposed within a base supporting the substrate. However, all of the temperature adjusting mechanisms in Sato adjust the temperature of the substrate area covered with the vessel only, and none of the

temperature adjusting mechanisms adjust the temperature of the area not covered with the vessel. See, e.g., Fig. 3 of Sato, relied on in the Office Action. Accordingly, Sato does not provide a uniform temperature distribution throughout the substrate including the area covered with the vessel and the other area not covered with the vessel like the apparatus of Claim 1. Indeed, while Sato may be well-suited for its intended purpose, nothing in Sato would teach or suggest a first temperature adjusting mechanism that adjusts a temperature of the one region on the surface of the substrate covered with the vessel, and a second temperature adjusting mechanism that adjusts a temperature of another region on the surface of the substrate not covered with the vessel, as set forth in Claim 1.

Accordingly, Claim 1 is believed to be clearly patentable over Sato.

Claim 3 is a method claim corresponding in many respect to apparatus Claim 1, and also is believed to be clearly patentable over Sato for substantially the same reasons as is Claim 1.

A review of the other art of record has failed to reveal anything which, in Applicant's opinion, would remedy the deficiencies of the art discussed above, as a reference against the independent claims herein. Those claims are therefore believed patentable over the art of record.

The other claims in this application are each dependent from one or another of the independent claims discussed above and are therefore believed patentable for the same reasons. Since each dependent claim is also deemed to define an additional aspect of

the invention, however, the individual reconsideration of the patentability of each on its own merits is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration and early passage to issue of the present application.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

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